Concerned Ratepayers Kapiti

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Early Engagement Meeting
KCDC’s Draft Long Term Plan 2027-2037

19 July 2026

OVERVIEW OF MEETING

- Welcome
- Introducing the Concerned Ratepayers Kapiti committee
- Presentation – Having your say to shape the next 10 years
- Discussion and completing surveys
- How you can get involved and wrap up

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INTRODUCTION TO THE CONCERNED RATEPAYERS COMMITTEE

We are a grassroots community group advocating for fair and sustainable rates on the Kapiti Coast.

Focus areas right now are:

- Keeping rates at affordable levels through the new Long-term Plan
- Council putting core responsibilities and community priorities first
- Smart spending that protects your wallets
- Clear and timely information so we can truly engage
- Opportunities for real consultation with a Council that listens- public accountability
- A stronger voice for all Kapiti Coast residents

Context

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CURRENT LEGISLATIVE ENVIRONMENT – THE ‘BIG PICTURE’

- CHANGES ALREADY ADOPTED:
  - ‘Local Water Done Well’

- CHANGES ABOUT TO BE ADOPTED/STILL IN PROCESS:
  - Local Government Systems Improvement Bill
  - RMA Reform

- GOVERNMENT PROPOSALS/DIRECTIVES:
  - Rates Capping
  - Simplifying Local Government
  - Other directives from the Minister of Local Government

ALREADY ENACTED

- **LOCAL WATER DONE WELL**
  - ‘Three Waters’ legislation repealed 2024
  - Legislative requirements for LWDW enacted and public consultation completed 2025
    - Councils were required to have a Water Services Delivery Plan by Sep 2025
  - Many Councils chose CCOs for implementation, most are multi-Council
    - NOTE – Unlike e.g. Wellington Water, ownership of water assets is being transferred to CCO Boards
  - KCDC chose in-house business unit
  - Still unclear - proportion of costs on user charges and on rates
  - Some CCOs established to ‘go live’ from 1 July 2026, but statutory deadline for LWDW implementation is 1 July 2027

WHAT'S IN THE PIPELINE/STILL IN LEGISLATIVE PROCESS

- **LOCAL GOVERNMENT SYSTEMS IMPROVEMENT AMENDMENT BILL**
  - Refocus on core services
  - Repeal of 2019 'Wellbeing' clauses
  - Code of Conduct for elected members and provisions about access to information
  - Supplementary Order Paper adds removal of voting rights for non-elected appointees to Council committees

- **RESOURCES MANAGEMENT ACT REFORM – Two Bills proposed:**
  - The Planning Act
  - The Natural Environment Act

GOVERNMENT PROPOSALS/DIRECTIVES

- **RATES CAPPING**
  - Proposal planned for implementation 2027-2029
  - Directive to Councils to consider in setting rates for 2026/27 financial year
  - Not in legislative form yet
- **SIMPLIFYING LOCAL GOVERNMENT**
  - Government notified intention to abolish regional councils
  - Process under way for Councils to submit amalgamation proposals
  - Implementation timeline notified 2026-2028
  - Not in legislative form yet
- **OTHER PROPOSALS/MINISTERIAL DIRECTIVES TO COUNCILS**
  - Refocus on core services – 2024
  - Climate change planning and use of RCP/SSP criteria

WHAT ABOUT AMALGAMATION?

- **Government notified intention/process to abolish regional councils Nov 2025**
- **Revised process to develop/approve amalgamation proposals notified May 2026**
  - Head Start process - Councils put forward proposals (2 or more councils amalgamating as unitary authority)
  - Backstop – Government will decide
- **Timeline notified for proposed amalgamation implementation 2026-2028**
  - Councils submit proposals by 9 August 2026
  - Cabinet gives initial approval of proposals September 2026
  - Public consultation from Sep 2026, final proposals submitted March 2027
  - May 2027 – Cabinet confirms proposals, makes final policy decisions
  - Legislation introduced – Quarter 3/4 2027
  - Legislation adopted Quarter 1 2028
  - May 2028 – Proposal implementation begins (process not notified yet)

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Early Engagement on the Long Term Plan 2027-2037

THE LONG TERM PLAN 2024-2034

- The Long-Term Plan matters – it sets the direction of the Council's work and budget for the following 10 years.

- It therefore sets out the rates path for the next 10 years.

- KCDC's current Long-Term Plan set out a rates path for Kapiti residents to 2034 and, to date, Councillors have strived not to exceed the rates increases set out in the current Long-Term Plan.

- By law, the Long-Term Plan must be renewed every three years, after each round of Council elections.

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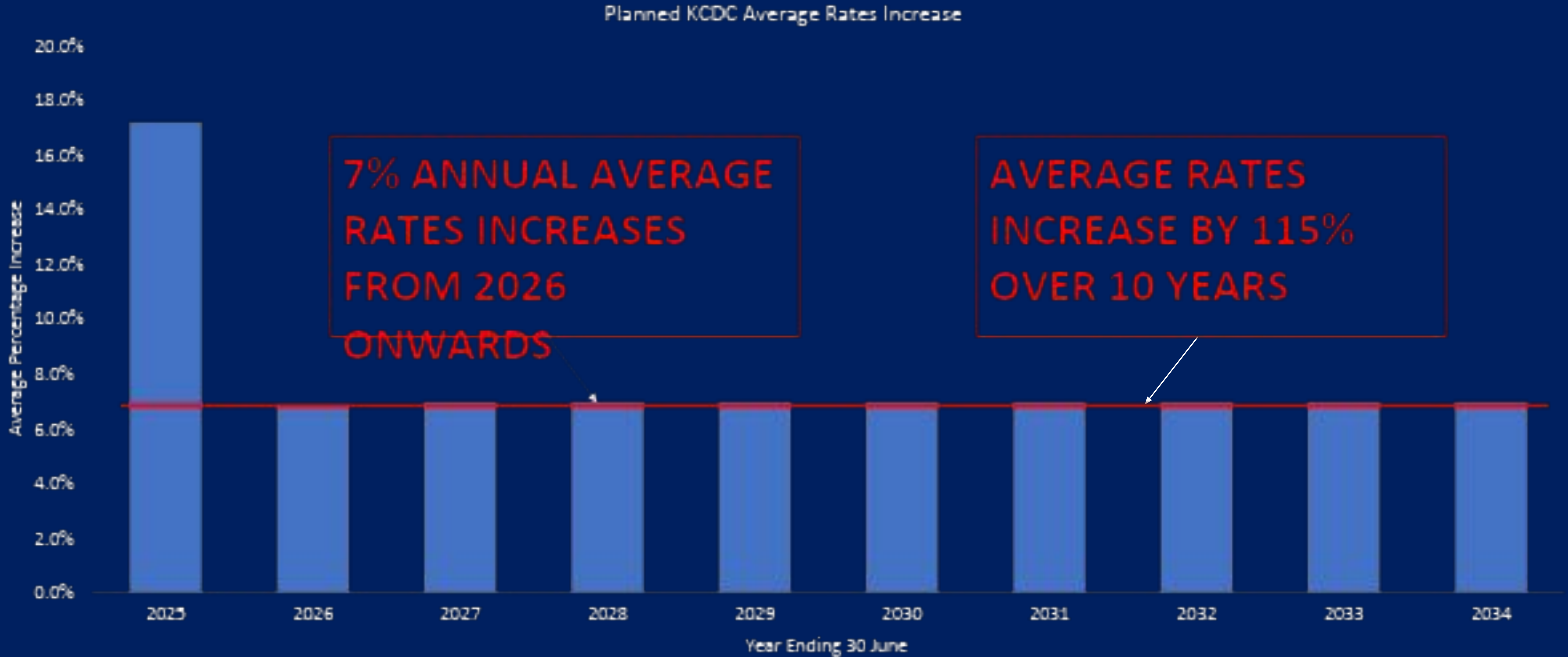
LEVEL OF AVERAGE ANNUAL RATES INCREASES: LONG TERM PLAN 2024-2034



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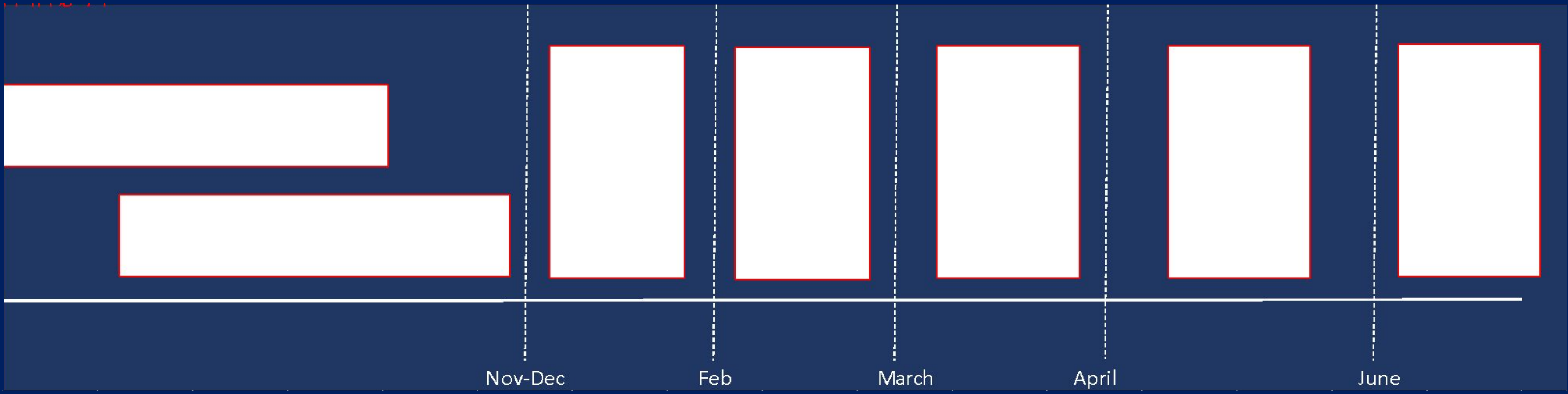
THE TRADITIONAL PROCESS TO DETERMINE A LONG TERM PLAN

- There are minimum requirements set out in law about how a Long-Term Plan must be developed, which results in this standard process:



Bouquets

UNFORTUNATELY

The design of the formal feedback form, that you have been asked to provide your feedback on, has every likelihood of re-inforcing the status quo – including high future rates increases.

whether this was intended or not.

Let's look at the questions in the feedback form to see what we mean – and what you can do in your feedback to avoid inadvertently supporting KCDC doing more of the same

Including high future rates increases.

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While we are going to outline some suggestions for how you could frame your feedback, it’s really important that you provide the feedback that <u>you</u> want to provide, in the way you want to say it.

Our suggestions are only that …. suggestions you might choose to use. If you want to say something different, you should.

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QUESTION ONE: COMMUNITY PRIORITIES

This question asks you to indicate whether these “community priorities” are the right things for KCDC to focus on as it develops the next LTP. You are asked to tick “yes” or “no” for each:

Housing	Land Use
Health	Waters
Connected Communities	Working with Others
Peace, safety and equality	Shaping our direction together

Framed this way, how many people do you think will tick “no” to any of these?

SO WHAT'S WRONG WITH QUESTION ONE: COMMUNITY PRIORITIES?

The categories in Question One mix up things that are:

- absolutely core business for KCDC – and should continue to be provided

with

- a number of things that are discretionary – and <u>could</u> be provided if spending is desirable, effective and affordable

and with

- things that are – and should continue to be - the responsibility of others.

Our concern is that if you tick "yes" all of the items in Question One – which the way it is framed many people would reasonably do - then KCDC will say it has a community mandate to keep on doing exactly what it does now – with ongoing high rates increases as a consequence.

FOR QUESTION ONE, WE RECOMMEND:

- Do NOT answer Question One – or say “no” to all – as it carries too much risk of reinforcing more of the same from KCDC
- Address the issues Question One might be trying to get at, through your answer to Question Two

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QUESTION TWO

This question asks you to write in the box whether you have other views about the Council's priority areas. We recommend that you write something along these lines (we will provide you with a copy of this, if you want):

The priorities should focus on **Council prioritising the delivery of its fundamental responsibilities on providing core services.** We suggest the following priorities:

- **Governance and management (running an effective and efficient council with Community Boards, enabling democracy in action, every day)**
- **Water**
- **Regulatory functions (land use, building/ resource consents, by-laws)**
  Network Infrastructure: District wide planning, (RMA, with GWRC, coastal management), Access and Transport (local roads, footpaths)
  Waste management and minimisation
- **Disaster management, emergency preparedness**
- **Community and recreational facilities including libraries, pools, parks and open spaces, sports fields, community buildings, cemeteries)**
- **Over and above this list, the major events fund is useful if its affordable, as it builds a sense of community.**

QUESTION THREE: PLANNING PRINCIPLES

This question asks you to indicate whether these "planning principles" are the principles KCDC should use to make decisions. You are asked to tick "yes" or "no" for each:

Community voice	Live within our financial limits
Growth pays for growth	Prioritise the must-dos
User pays where it makes sense	

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FOR QUESTION THREE, WE RECOMMEND:

That you tick “no” to all of these principles in Question 3 or do not answer the question

because

as written the suggested principles are a bit too loose. We suggest that you provide a tighter set of principles in your answer to Question Four.

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FOR QUESTION FOUR, WE RECOMMEND:

This question asks you to write in the box whether you have other views about the Council's planning principles. We recommend that you write something along these lines in **bold text** (we will provide you with a copy of this, if you want):

- **Live within the finances provided by affordable rates across the Kapiti District**
  ("Live within our limits" is too broad as the limit is not specified. The limit could be rates increases of 10% per annum! We suggest this principle needs to be unequivocal in its intent.)
- **Prioritise core responsibilities**
  (Focusing on 'must dos' is open to interpretation. We suggest Council should focus on its fundamental responsibilities)
- **Community voice- community feedback**
  (We are not clear how not sure what 'local insights' mean and how they are gathered. It's redundant and open to interpretation.)
- **Growth pays for growth** *(No change)*
- **User pays (using Auditor General Guidelines)**
- *(We would like to see this principle applied using a transparent rationale.)*

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QUESTION FIVE: "LET'S TALK RATES"

This question asks you:

5. If Council aimed to keep the total KCDC rates (general and water rates) paid at no more than 5% of median household income (based on rates affordability data), would you be prepared to accept reduced levels of service* in some areas to achieve this?

We can see what this question is designed to do – it's trying to have a discussion with the community about choices and trade-offs – but is the question as framed is fundamentally flawed.

SO WHAT'S WRONG WITH QUESTION FIVE: "LET'S TALK RATES"?

The starting point for this question is that the only way to keep rates levels affordable – is to cut the level of services.

We reject the premise of this question.

The question assumes:

- Everything that KCDC does now is a priority
- There is no wasteful spending at KCDC
- There are no efficiencies to be found in how KCDC delivers services
- That debt reduction – if it occurs – must paid by rates increases (which is the current LTP assumption)
- That cost-plus budgeting will continue into the future.

FOR QUESTION FIVE, WE RECOMMEND:

That you say something like (we will provide you with a copy of this, if you want):

We support the approach of limiting spending to no more than 5% of median household incomes including water and regional council rates. When this is in place, then Council should exercise financial discipline by:

- **Planning should ensure all essential services are budgeted before any 'discretionary spending' is considered**
- **Any discretionary spending that is not affordable within the spending limit should be reduced or stopped altogether**
- **Operational spending should increase no faster than the rate of inflation (the CPI)**
- **New spending outside of the financial limit should be funded from savings in current activities**
- **Council should undertake, and act on, efficiency and cost management audits to ensure that all services are provided at maximum efficiency and at reasonable cost**
- **Capital projects should be reviewed to ensure that they are actually needed, and that the scope of work is not over-specified**
- **Borrowing should only be used for agreed infrastructure projects, not day-to-day operations**
- **Depreciation should be used to repay debt rather than rates increases.**

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NEXT STEPS

- Feedback is required to KCDC by midnight Sunday 26 July.

- Your voice matters – if residents don't give their feedback to ask for a change in direction, KCDC will assume that residents are actually happy with how thing have been and the level of rates increases. They will just keep on doing what they have done.

- We understand there will be a second survey in "September" with some more granular questions about priorities and trade-offs.

- Remember – what comes out of this new Long-Term Plan will determine your rates increases for the next 3 years at least – and maybe for the next 10 years.

- And once the LTP is set, KCDC have shown that they will NOT consult with the community again on the level of annual rates increases. They will assume they have a mandate.

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HOW WE CAN HELP YOU WITH YOUR SUBMISSION

- Our CRK team is here to help- what questions have we left unanswered?

- If you wish, you can complete a paper survey now, here in this meeting. We will make sure they are received by Council.

Or

- Take a copy of some of our ideas with you- also online at https://concernedratepayerskapiti.org

- Email your ward councillor, a district wide councillor, your Community Board chair.

Tell them what you think.

- Talk to your neighbours and friends . Help them see the importance of this survey.

Don’t leave leave it to someone else- your feedback will count.

Thank you for your active participation today

And thank you to the CRK team

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Backup Slides

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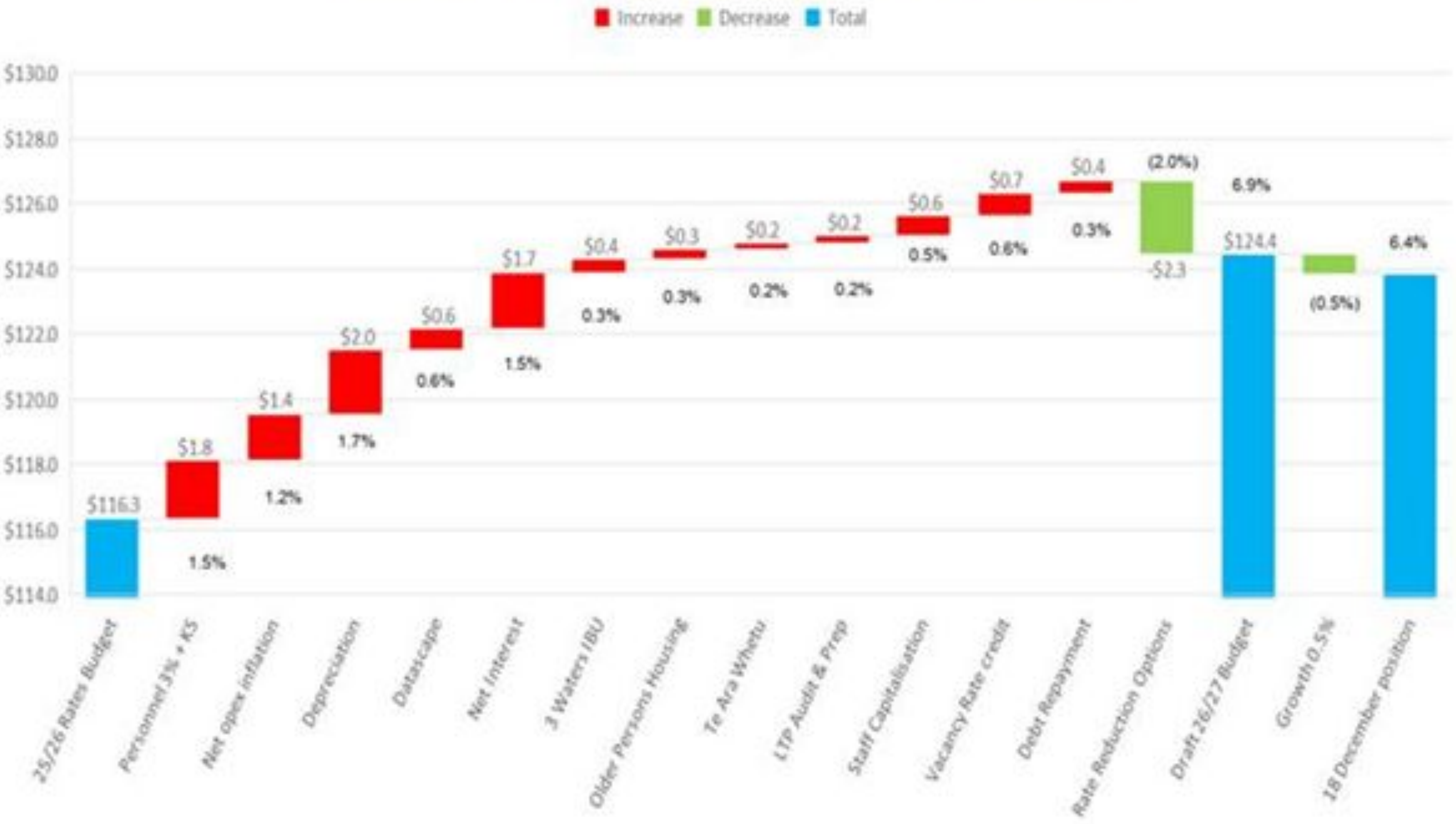
THE ECONOMIC DOUGHNUT MODEL

An unfocussed framework that cannot help KCDC to prioritise and make choices related back to its core responsibilities

As a “social and economic justice” model, it encourages KCDC to move into areas that are the responsibility of others, for example in health and in the realm of intergenerational equity, which KCDC does not have the levers for, and cannot be responsible for. And yet KCDC is setting itself health and equity goals in its LTP.

2026/27 rates revenue cost drivers and rates reduction options



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